GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3382
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2005
PROGRESS OF LAND REFORMS IN STATES
Prasad Shri Hari Kewal;Yadav Shri Giridhari

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tenth Plan identified land reforms as an important policy instrument for the alleviation of rural poverty;

(b) if so, the progress made in various States in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission has expressed unhappiness over the lack of progress in this regard in the plan appraisal; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a) to (d): Land reforms have been an important plank of poverty alleviation strategy in the country. The Tenth five Year Plan had indicated that demographic factors, changes in the agricultural technology and increasing importance of market forces had considerably weakened the case for a land reform programme that concentrated on abolition of intermediaries and reduction in land ceilings to generate ceiling surplus land for redistribution. The Plan suggested that there was need to implement the ceiling laws with greater vigour, re-examine the issues of tenancy, address the question of tribal alienation and incorporate more gender friendly laws in the context of feminisation of agricultural operations.

The State Governments implement various provisions related to land reforms. These include conferment of ownership rights to tenants, detection of ceiling surplus land and its distribution, restoration of alienated tribal lands and distribution of government wastelands among the poor. The State Governments have so far provided ownership rights to 124.22 lakh tenants covering an area of 156.30 lakh acres. Similarly, 57.46 lakh beneficiaries were distributed 54.03 lakh ceiling surplus land. 147.47 lakh acres of wastelands has been distributed to the poor. Upto 31st March, 2004, 4.47 lakh acres of alienated tribal land had been restored to the tribal community.

The Mid Term Review of the Tenth Plan has reiterated that there is a need to vigorously pursue land reforms to enable the poor access to land.